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FAQ on the topic of VID/PID

Q1: When MUST I apply for my own USB VID & PID?

A: The only time you MUST register a Vendor ID (VID) and Product ID (PID) with the USB-IF is when your company wants to use the trademarked "USB Certified" Logo on your product or its packaging. To get a look at the logo and read more information on using the logo click on http://www.usb.org/developers/logo_license.html.

Q2: If I use FTDI's VID and PID will the product display FTDI as the manufacturer at install time

A: Users of USB chips from FTDI can customize the Manufacturer and Product Description String to say anything they want in the driver install window. FTDI doesn't have to be mentioned at all. The only requirement here is that an EEPROM memory device must be connected to the FTDI chip to store the strings.

Q3: I wish to use the new USB Certified Logo and add my product to the USB I/F Integrators List that I can. What is involved?

A: If using the trademarked logo, you need to have your device certified and added to the USB Integrators List. To do this you either attend a compliance workshop (Plugfest) OR send your peripheral to an USB approved compliance testing lab to have your peripheral tested for a fee. To the first you must be a USB-IF member (\$2,500/year, which doesn't include the expenses involved traveling to and attending the workshop) and to do the second you must either be a USB-IF member OR purchase a USB VID from the USB-IF (\$1,500 renewable every two years).

In order to ensure a reasonable chance of passing the compliance test it is advisable to pre-test at your own location using the same setup and equipment used at a Plugfest. If you add up the cost purchasing the recommended hardware and test equipment, prepare to budget upwards of \$30k. Details on USB compliance testing can be found on the USB.ORG test site at <http://www.usb.org/developers/compliance/>

Q4: If I want to use FTDI's VID what are the restrictions ?

A: FTDI's policy on using their VID and PID with their chips is as follows:

1. FTDI discourages people from using the DEFAULT VID, PID and serial number (no EEPROM connected to the FTDI chip) unless it is a non-mass market device and does not require multiple devices of the same kind to be plugged into the same PC.
2. The customer can use FTDI's default VID (0403) and PID (6001) and have a unique serial number for each USB device. This requires an EEPROM to be connected to the FTDI chip.
3. The customer can use FTDI's VID and request a unique PID block from FTDI for their products

FTDI maintains a list of unique PIDs which can be allocated on request. This is the best approach, only downside is that the customer has to add the new PID reference into the standard (text) INF driver files.

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